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REDISTRICTING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

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PUBLIC SESSION

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Monday, June 20, 2011

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13

5:15 p.m.

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15

Room 105, Gressette Building

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Columbia, South Carolina

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19 REPORTED BY:

Janni S. Jardine
Court Reporter

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2 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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4 SENATOR GLENN F. McCONNELL, CHAIRMAN

5 SENATOR ROBERT FORD

6 SENATOR RAYMOND E. CLEARY, III

7 SENATOR C. BRADLEY HUTTO

8 SENATOR GERALD MALLOY

9 SENATOR LARRY A. MARTIN

10 SENATOR PHILLIP W. SHOOPMAN

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12

STAFF PRESENT:

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14 CHARLES TERRENI, CHIEF COUNSEL

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2 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right. I'm going
3 to call this public hearing on congressional
4 redistricting plans to order. I want to welcome everyone
5 to this important hearing. And let me stop and say I
6 apologize we don't have more space, but this is -- about
7 is -- I think is our biggest room in the building. And
8 we're going to -- until the fire marshal gives us some
9 edict that we've got to move some folks to another room,
10 we're going to try to accommodate you in here as best we
11 can.

12 I want to welcome every one of you,
13 again. As I've stated with the Senate Redistricting
14 Plan, what we do today and in the coming days will have a
15 major impact on the citizens of our state for the next
16 decade.

17 For the first time since the 1920s, South
18 Carolina has seven congressional districts, and as this
19 subcommittee heard during the public hearings across the
20 state, the location of the new congressional district is
21 of great importance to many people.

22 We are convened tonight to receive public
23 comments about the proposed staff congressional plans and
24 the other proposed congressional plans that were
25 submitted to us for consideration. The two proposed

1 staff congressional plans were posted on our website on
2 Friday, June the 17th, 2011.

3 In addition to today's hearing, the
4 subcommittee will meet tomorrow, Tuesday, June the 21st,
5 at 10 a.m. to deliberate on a congressional plan.

6 And is it going to be in this room?

7 MS. HAMMOND: Yes.

8 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right. It will be
9 in this room.

10 The full Judiciary Committee is scheduled
11 to meet later that same day, tomorrow, at 3 p.m. to
12 consider the subcommittee's recommendations and possible
13 amendments. The Judiciary Committee will, in turn, issue
14 its report to the full Senate.

15 As I also mentioned during our hearings on
16 Senate redistricting, this Redistricting Subcommittee has
17 endeavored to have an open and participatory process for
18 redistricting.

19 The subcommittee members traveled to ten
20 public hearings all across the state to listen to the
21 concerns of all interested parties, and we heard a great
22 deal of testimony about congressional districts at each
23 of these hearings.

24 I want to remind everyone that over 700
25 people attended these hearings, and more than 150 people

1 spoke to us or sent in written comments. I think we all
2 learned a lot through these public hearings and the
3 written comments.

4 After the public hearings, this
5 subcommittee met, and following careful consideration and
6 discussions, adopted redistricting guidelines to follow
7 in drafting and evaluating redistricting plans, which
8 apply to both congressional and Senate redistricting
9 plans.

10 In the matter of variances, I want to
11 remind everyone here that congressional districts can
12 only vary in size by one person, not 1 percent. Each
13 district must be mathematically within plus or minus one
14 person of the required 660,766 population.

15 We invited and received from interested
16 parties several proposed congressional plans. All of
17 these public submissions have been posted on the Senate
18 redistricting website, including the two proposed staff
19 plans for congressional redistricting.

20 I expect we will be hearing various
21 comments from individuals here tonight on several of
22 these plans. As we go through this process, we must be
23 conscious of the needs and concerns of all of our
24 citizens as we draw these new congressional districts.

25 A congressional plan must comply with the

1 redistricting guidelines, the U.S. Constitution, our
2 state constitution, and the Voting Rights Act.

3 Because this is a public hearing, we want
4 to hear from the public, so I'm asking the subcommittee
5 members to keep any questions or comments brief unless
6 there is an issue that needs immediate clarification, as
7 you will have an opportunity tomorrow morning to engage
8 in discussion.

9 Unless there are any questions or comments
10 from the subcommittee at this time, I will call on the
11 first person to speak. And I would ask, for the sake of
12 all of these people that want to be heard, to try to keep
13 your comments concise. And if somebody has stated what
14 you would have stated, has already stated it, if you
15 reaffirm that, then it will be the same as if we hear it,
16 and it will give everybody an ample opportunity to
17 hear -- to be heard on all of these plans.

18 So with that --

19 All right. Counsel informs me -- we try to
20 ask people to keep their comments to three to five
21 minutes for the purposes of getting through everybody.
22 The other thing is, if it 's a particular plan that
23 you're here to speak on, if you will tell us, hopefully
24 we can put it on the screen here if that will assist in
25 your presentation to the committee. And I think the

1 podium right here is all activated.

2 So with that, we'll get started. And our
3 first person is Ms. Mary Helen Yarborough.

4 Ms. Yarborough?

5 Okay. I'll move to the second one, Mr. Joe
6 Dugan.

7 MR. DUGAN: Good afternoon, Senator
8 McConnell.

9 SENATOR McCONNELL: Good afternoon, sir.

10 MR. DUGAN: Members of the subcommittee on
11 redistricting, good to see you all again. We were here
12 to see you a week or so ago, maybe two weeks ago.

13 Please take into account when you make your
14 decision on the new congressional district --

15 SENATOR MALLOY: Mr. Chairman?

16 SENATOR McCONNELL: Yes, sir.

17 SENATOR MALLOY: We would ask -- I would
18 like for each one of the people that will speak to let us
19 know where they are from.

20 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right. We got it
21 for the record here, but you all didn't.

22 But go ahead, if you would, sir.

23 MR. DUGAN: Okay. My name is Joe Dugan,
24 and I am chairman of the board of the Myrtle Beach Tea
25 Party. And I am here to address this committee with a

1 number of issues that we would like to relate to you.

2 And I ask you to please take them into your -- into

3 account when you make your decisions on the new

4 congressional district for South Carolina.

5 When attending the House Committee hearing
6 in Myrtle Beach, I advocated placing Horry County in the
7 new district for the following reasons: Horry County has
8 had 37-percent population growth over the past ten years,
9 from 2000 to 2010. That growth rate probably would have
10 been greater than 75 percent had we not had the housing
11 crisis that has peaked in 2005.

12 So half of that decade was lost in our
13 growth rate because, as you are well aware, everything
14 shut down. The banks locked their doors, and nobody sold
15 a house. You are well aware of the no-interest and the
16 no-doc and sub-prime loans that were being issued in
17 2005.

18 When the housing bubble burst, those first
19 affected were loans for second homes, which hit Horry
20 County particularly bad. Everyone suffered, but vacation
21 home -- homes bled the most.

22 We will not get another chance for
23 redistricting for another ten years. And if the housing
24 market does recover, it is quite reasonable to assume
25 that the baby boomers will -- once they sell their

1 mansions in the North, they will move to smaller homes
2 and warmer climates near the ocean. That has been the
3 pattern for generations upon generations, and it will
4 bring us -- bring us huge population growth through 2020.
5 But even though our population skyrockets, we will have
6 no chance until 2020 to get another congressional seat.

7 In one area of Horry County, Carolina
8 Forest, over the last decade, the population has grown by
9 over 520 percent.

10 Also, Horry -- because of tourism, Horry
11 County pays a huge amount to the state coffers and is in
12 dire need of infrastructure such as evacuation routes.
13 And we have all seen natural disasters in this country in
14 recent years that costs have been astronomical. However,
15 the biggest cost we might have to pay may be in human
16 life, should our citizens and tourists get caught on the
17 coast in a severe hurricane.

18 Horry County also happens to be the largest
19 county geographically east of the Mississippi River, and
20 yet it is also one of the poorest. The largest cash
21 crop, tobacco, has followed the demise of the textile
22 industry, and it now needs to be brought into the age of
23 technology to grow and prosper. We have special needs,
24 and with them require a congressman who can focus on
25 bringing technology and jobs to this part of the state.

1 Prior to 1990, Horry County and the Pee Dee
2 were linked for a hundred years. The time has come for
3 us to go back to that model of shared interests and
4 communities. Because of the growth of the Pee Dee, we
5 need a congressman to focus on the growth in this area.

6 There are many other issues that I have not
7 delineated here that you will hear from other people.
8 But I honestly can say to you that we are now -- one of
9 the -- one of your plans, your Plan 1, shows Myrtle Beach
10 and North Myrtle Beach divided, where North Myrtle Beach
11 would be in the new District 7, and Myrtle Beach, which
12 shares all the common interests with North Myrtle Beach,
13 would be kept in District 1. That just does not make any
14 sense to me.

15 I understand that you gentlemen have a
16 problem with figuring out the numbers to meet the court's
17 needs so that you can get a redistricting --
18 redistricting plan accepted, but to divide an area of
19 common tourism like this into two separate districts just
20 doesn't make any sense to me.

21 And the other thing is that I fully
22 sympathize with Charleston's needs and them needing to
23 get their harbor dredged. But we need some help with our
24 infrastructure and an advocate in congress for it, for
25 501. We drive from Conway or -- down to North Myrtle

1 Beach or to Myrtle Beach, and we can sit in traffic there
2 for an hour and move three miles during the summertime.
3 Traffic just comes to a dead halt. And so we have our
4 own needs, and we're certainly paying our fair share, or
5 more, to the state.

6 And some of it -- I have a gentleman here
7 with me today that is a small businessman. He owns a
8 restaurant called Rotelli's in Conway, and he told me
9 today that of the 10-and-half-percent sales tax that his
10 customers pay when they go there to dine, 8 percent of
11 it, fully 8 percent of it, goes to the state. And what
12 comes back? That money goes to Charleston. It stays in
13 Columbia. What about the -- you know, this tax is not
14 just for tourists. There are people that live there all
15 year round, and they have to pay these exorbitant tax
16 rates that -- you know, I can understand you wanting to
17 sock it to the tourists a little bit, but it should have
18 been done sensibly with a motel rate tax, and not -- if I
19 go into Myrtle Beach and have dinner with my wife, it's
20 11-and-a-half percent on a meal.

21 So I would thank you for taking these
22 points into consideration in your decision making. These
23 are only a few arguments in favor of an Horry/Pee Dee
24 district, but I hope you will give them some thought and
25 consideration.

1 Thank you very much.

2 SENATOR McCONNELL: Thank you, sir.

3 Representative Alan Clemmons.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Thank you so
5 much, gentlemen. Alan Clemmons, House of
6 Representatives, District 107. I represent Myrtle Beach.

7 I promise not to read this book to you
8 today, but I'm a student of history, like many of you are
9 students of history. And this book is the Historical
10 Atlas of United States Congressional Districts from 1789,
11 and in this abstract, it reflects that the very first
12 congressional districts drawn in South Carolina by
13 founders of this nation, drawn and ratified in 1788, put
14 at that time what was called the Cheraw/Georgetown
15 District together.

16 Now, they called it the Cheraw/Georgetown
17 District because that's all there was in the Pee Dee at
18 that time, Cheraw and Georgetown. But if you look at the
19 map, it's all of the Pee Dee region.

20 Now, the Pee Dee region constitutes a
21 number of counties. Those counties are Horry,
22 Georgetown, Florence, Darlington, Chesterfield, Dillon,
23 Marlboro, Marion, Lee, and Williamsburg. Today, that's
24 about 700,000 in population.

25 Okay. So they were put together by the

1 founders of this nation in one congressional district.

2 Why is that? Because they were a community of interest.

3 At that time, the Pee Dee River was the main mode of
4 transportation and trade. The Pee Dee River -- everybody
5 used the Pee Dee River. The counties that touched the
6 Pee Dee River became brothers and sisters in a Pee Dee
7 region -- in a Pee Dee family, if you will.

8 That configuration continued for the First
9 and Second Congresses, then, again, in the Third Congress
10 through the Seventh Congress. In the Eighth through
11 Twelfth Congress, Darlington, Georgetown, Horry, Marion,
12 and Marlboro were together. This continued on
13 throughout -- on until our times.

14 In 1991 -- in 1991, that district was split
15 apart by a congressional -- by a draw by the courts.
16 Congressional district in the Pee Dee was split, and it
17 was divided up amongst several different congressional
18 districts. Horry was put with Charleston. We had never
19 been with Charleston before. In fact, if you look back
20 at Charleston's history as a congressional district, from
21 the 48th Congress, about 1880 until 1991, Charleston was
22 tied with Beaufort.

23 Gentlemen of the subcommittee, it is my
24 opinion and it is the opinion of the House of
25 Representatives that it makes sense to bring the Pee Dee

1 back together in a congressional district represented by
2 a Pee Dee congressman. It makes sense today just like it
3 made sense 200 years ago.

4 One of the things that the House looked at
5 while drawing its plan was an organization known as the
6 Northeastern Strategic Alliance. Every one of the
7 counties contained in the Northeastern Strategic Alliance
8 are contained within the seventh congressional district
9 that the House drew, every one of those counties.

10 The Northeastern Strategic Alliance is more
11 than just a volunteer organization of counties. It is an
12 organization of counties who pay to have membership in
13 their organization. My county, Horry County, pays about
14 20 percent of the operating budget of the Northeastern
15 Strategic Alliance between private business, local
16 government, and county government. Every one of the
17 counties pay to be a part of NESA. NESA is Horry
18 County --

19 SENATOR MALLOY: Mr. Chairman?

20 SENATOR McCONNELL: Yes.

21 SENATOR MALLOY: Question, is Williamsburg
22 in the NESA?

23 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: It is not. As I
24 said, there are ten counties in the Pee Dee, including
25 Lee and Williamsburg. That's about 700,000 population.

1 That's too much for one congressional district.

2 SENATOR MALLOY: But is Williamsburg in
3 NESA?

4 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: But Williamsburg
5 is not in NESA, no. Neither is Lee County. But every
6 one of the NESA counties are contained within the seventh
7 district, as drawn by the House.

8 NESA is Horry County and Florence County
9 and Darlington County, and every one of the counties
10 within the region that the House drew as a seventh
11 district is our economic development arm. It's who we
12 depend upon to go out and attract business and industry
13 to come into our area.

14 Today, the NESA organization is working
15 with 25 different prospects that are interested in
16 locating into Horry County. That translates into about
17 3,000 jobs. That's what's going on in Horry. The same
18 story is going on throughout all the NESA counties. We
19 are tied together by commerce.

20 When our football teams go to play
21 football, it's usually against a Pee Dee team. When we
22 go to hospitals, our regional hospitals are contained in
23 Florence and Horry Counties.

24 Senator Hutto, you and I are very involved
25 with the Boy Scout organization. When I was a Boy Scout,

1 I was a part of the Pee Dee Area Council. Later, I had
2 the honor of serving in the Pee Dee Area Council as its
3 president. But all of the Pee Dee counties are part of
4 the Pee Dee Area Council, and it still is today.

5 When I went to boys' camp, I went from
6 Horry County to Chesterfield County, to Camp Coker. My
7 little girls, when they were Girl Scouts, they were part
8 of the Pee Dee Girl Scout organization. And when they
9 went to summer camp, they went from Horry County to
10 Marlboro County in a camp called Camp Pee Dee, located
11 between Bennettsville and Cheraw.

12 When we have a Federal Court matter in the
13 Pee Dee, in Horry or in Marlboro County or in Dillon
14 County, we go to the Federal Court in Florence.

15 We've been advocating as a NESAs
16 organization and as a region for I-73. We're tied
17 together on so many fronts. It makes so much sense to
18 bring our Pee Dee family back together again. Put us
19 together so we can elect a Pee Dee congressman to
20 represent Pee Dee interests in the United States
21 Congress.

22 I would like to add, with regard to the
23 first congressional plan, the first staff plan that
24 you've released, in looking at the Pee Dee region, the
25 two major cities of the Pee Dee are Myrtle Beach and

1 Florence. Your first -- your Number 1 draw would split
2 one of those two main cities of the Pee Dee out of the
3 Pee Dee. I would request, respectfully but forcefully,
4 that we keep Horry County whole. Horry County needs to
5 stay whole. It needs to have a voice as a whole county.

6 You've taken Georgetown County out of the
7 mix. Georgetown County is an integral part of the Pee
8 Dee. It has our port. It has our Pee Dee port in it.
9 We have a lot of common ties with Georgetown. It's one
10 of us. It's a part of our family.

11 The one last note I would like to leave
12 with you is media. The FCC has -- has designated the
13 Florence, Darlington, Horry County market as a media
14 market. An order had been issued. Hearings have been
15 held. They have determined that our commonalities of
16 interest, our community of interest, is the same.

17 I see some television cameras here. Guess
18 what? Every one of these stations represented here are
19 Horry County stations, but people in Darlington, people
20 in Hartsville, people in Florence, people in
21 Bennettsville are going to see this newscast because we
22 are one community of interest.

23 Gentlemen, I would -- I would request that
24 you take a hard look at the House plan for the seventh
25 congressional district, and whatever plan you adopt, keep

1 us together as one voice. Don't split our communities
2 up, and don't split the counties up insofar as possible
3 to reach your deviations.

4 Those are my remarks, gentlemen. I would
5 be happy to entertain any questions that you might have.

6 SENATOR FORD: Real quick?

7 SENATOR McCONNELL: Yes, sir, Senator Ford.

8 SENATOR FORD: What's the racial breakdown
9 in this district?

10 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: I'm sorry?

11 SENATOR FORD: What's the racial breakdown
12 under your plan?

13 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Under the House
14 plan, in the seventh district, the black voting-age
15 population is 27.6, if I recall correctly. And I'm
16 getting a nod from staff that that is correct.

17 SENATOR McCONNELL: The NESA -- just to
18 make the record straight, I'm looking at the map, and it
19 appears that Williamsburg is in that.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: It may be. It
21 may be, Senator. I did not recall that it was, but it
22 very possibly is.

23 SENATOR MALLOY: Mr. Chair, the senator
24 from Williamsburg is the chairman of NESA.

25 SENATOR McCONNELL: Oh, well, then I'm sure

1 it's in there.

2 SENATOR MALLOY: Senator McGill.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Oh, absolutely.

4 That's correct. Senator McGill is the chairman, so it
5 has to be in.

6 SENATOR FORD: Why did you leave it out?

7 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Population. One
8 of the counties had to come out in order to have the
9 appropriate deviation.

10 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right. Thank you,
11 sir. I appreciate it.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Thank you,
13 Senators. Thank you.

14 SENATOR McCONNELL: Ethan Rivera. Did I
15 get that name correct?

16 MR. RIVERA: Close enough.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this
18 committee. My name is Ethan Rivera. I'm a
19 most-of-my-life resident of Florence County, and I'm a
20 student at Francis Marion University, and that is what
21 the crux of my discussion with you here is today.

22 As you know, FMU is a state school, and
23 under the House plan that Mr. Clemmons was discussing
24 earlier, it is almost the geographic center of that
25 seventh district in Eastern -- in its location in Eastern

1 Florence County.

2 FMU, though it's a state school and draws
3 students from all the 50 states, most of their students
4 are coming from Florence, Marion, Darlington, some from
5 Horry County. Most of them are coming from that Pee Dee
6 area, and it has many partnerships with Coastal Carolina
7 for research, for shared resources, including, but
8 certainly not limited to, cohosting the last
9 gubernatorial debate. They collaborate on so much, and
10 it makes good, logical sense to have these two schools
11 and these two college communities in the same district.

12 Before I transferred to FMU, I was a
13 student at Florence-Darlington Technical College, and I
14 was there with you all and with a lot of the people here
15 at the hearing that was held there. And I made the point
16 that we were standing in Florence-Darlington Technical
17 College, in a college that draws the vast majority of its
18 students from Florence or Darlington County, and yet,
19 those two -- that group of students was split between two
20 districts. And there were even some students who
21 commuted all the way -- at least -- I know at least one
22 faculty member that I had who commuted from Conway. And
23 so you had a campus community split through not one, not
24 two, but three precincts.

25 It behooves the campus and it behooves this

1 committee to keep that seventh district that was up there
2 earlier together, and it will benefit those campuses as
3 well.

4 This is not a new concept that those of us
5 who support this seventh district in the Pee Dee and the
6 Grand Strand have come up. It was not developed in their
7 proverbial smoky back room with a bunch of backslapping
8 politicians. This is something that existed for over a
9 century.

10 The previous seventh district, the seventh
11 district had the Pee Dee and the Grand Strand.
12 Obviously, its reincarnation would have to be smaller
13 because it's one of seven and not one of six. But it
14 existed for a very long time as a congressional district,
15 and it elected -- it elected both Republicans and
16 Democrats, and it elected politicians of all stripes
17 because the people in that district knew what they wanted
18 and were able to elect their own representative. And I
19 believe that old sixth district should be, at the very
20 least, the blueprint, the starting point for this new
21 seventh district.

22 The conclusion of my comments is to ask
23 that you consider the many young people in the Pee Dee
24 and the Grand Strand area. The gentleman who came up
25 first pointed out that Horry County is one of the fastest

1 growing districts. I don't know if he -- he may have
2 just ran out of time, but one thing he forgot to mention,
3 it's also one of the youngest -- youngest counties in
4 South Carolina. It has a younger population. It also
5 has an older population, but a lot of the people who have
6 grown up there are younger, 20s and 30s.

7 My parents are not from this area, but they
8 moved here. They chose to move here, and they have
9 chosen to stay here. I and the rest of my classmates at
10 Francis Marion would like to make -- be able to make the
11 same decision, love to be able to stay in Florence County
12 and in the Pee Dee area, and make their career here, and
13 make their lives here.

14 And I ask that you consider them and take
15 this historic opportunity, which, you know, getting a new
16 district, it came once every 70 years for us. It might
17 not come for another 70 years. I ask that you please
18 keep them together and reunite the Grand Strand and the
19 Pee Dee in the new seventh congressional district.

20 Thank you.

21 SENATOR McCONNELL: Thank you.

22 Ms. Shery Smith.

23 MS. SMITH: Senator McConnell, I believe I
24 saw you in Sumter before.

25 SENATOR McCONNELL: You did.

1 MS. SMITH: Gentlemen of the subcommittee,
2 I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak
3 before you today.

4 I'm Shery Smith. I'm the chairwoman of the
5 Sumter Tea Party. I'm also secretary-treasurer of the
6 Sumter County Republican Party. I'm speaking on behalf
7 of both of these entities today and on behalf of the
8 citizens of the fifth and sixth districts of Sumter
9 County, a little different than what you've been hearing
10 so far.

11 Hundreds of us in both districts of
12 these -- of Sumter County spent countless hours pounding
13 the pavement, ringing doorbells, making phone calls, and
14 raising money to get Mick Mulvaney elected as our
15 congressman.

16 Congressman Mulvaney is the only voice that
17 many of us -- many of the citizens in the fifth and sixth
18 districts have in Washington, and, yes, I did say the
19 sixth district also.

20 Congressman Clyburn has no regard
21 whatsoever for the conservative population in his
22 district, so we have no reasonable expectation that he
23 would have any more concern for those of us who are
24 currently in the fifth, where we could be swallowed up
25 into the sixth district.

1 Please don't hurt the real, reasonable,
2 measurable growth of the Republican Party in our area by
3 placing us in the sixth district where conservatives have
4 no hope of help from Congressman Clyburn. We love Mick
5 Mulvaney. But if you cannot leave us in the fifth
6 district, then at least include us in the seventh
7 district. Don't abandon us.

8 Senators, the bottom line is the seventh
9 district can be drawn fairly in the Pee Dee, leaving the
10 Pee Dee intact as well as the fifth and sixth districts
11 intact with minimal changes. And, actually, the plans
12 that Congressmen Mulvaney and Clyburn originally agreed
13 to pretty much left them intact as they are now.

14 The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that
15 the current lines for the fifth and sixth districts were
16 appropriate ten years ago. With minimal changes required
17 because of the population shifts that are accommodated in
18 your Plan 2, all the citizens would have equal and fair
19 representation that they deserve. Plan 1 does not.

20 The House plan, however, actually was what
21 Congressmen Mulvaney and Clyburn -- is closer to what
22 they had originally agreed to themselves.

23 Please don't take our congressman, the
24 congressman that we elected, away from us. Thank you.

25 SENATOR McCONNELL: Johnnie Bellamy.

1 MS. BELLAMY: Good evening, Chairman
2 McConnell and committee members. Thank you very much for
3 your time today.

4 My name is Johnnie Bellamy. I was born in
5 Horry County. My parents and grandparents were born in
6 Horry County. I am the chairman of the Horry County
7 Republican Party, president of the Myrtle Beach
8 Republican Women, and secretary of the state Federation
9 of Republican Women.

10 Horry County and the Pee Dee region exists
11 as an entity with relationships based on 160 years of
12 history, and I just wanted to reiterate some of the
13 points that have been made before very quickly.

14 Horry County has a growth rate of 37
15 percent in the last ten years, and Carolina Forest, in
16 the middle of Myrtle Beach has had a growth of over 500
17 percent in the last ten years.

18 The Grand Strand tourism sends increasing
19 amounts of revenue and taxes to support South Carolina,
20 and we require our own representation to build an
21 infrastructure for the citizens of Horry County and the
22 Pee Dee region, which includes I-73 and the southern
23 evacuation route. We can just imagine what might happen
24 if we had an emergency. Trying to get out of that region
25 through 501 will be very, very difficult in a timely

1 fashion. So we need help with this. We need
2 representation to help Horry County and the Pee Dee
3 region.

4 Horry County must remain whole and
5 affiliated with the Pee Dee, hopefully in the seventh
6 congressional district, because our county and the Pee
7 Dee region work effectively and efficiently through their
8 shared people, process, and technologies, which have been
9 shared with you previously.

10 The coalitions and relationships are joined
11 through major arteries of commerce, roads through the
12 NESR region that has been discussed, and the FCC media
13 market that Representative Clemmons referenced, also
14 through these regional health and human services areas
15 and education campuses.

16 All roads to Myrtle Beach and the Grand
17 Strand go through the Pee Dee region. We are linked by
18 railroads, businesses and entertainment, and major
19 arteries of commerce and common economic interests. We
20 share media outlets, as Representative Clemmons
21 referenced, through the television, radio, newspapers,
22 and we receive all of our information through this
23 region.

24 We share regional cultural interests and
25 entertainment facilities. These major shared interests

1 do not exist between Horry and Charleston Counties. I
2 love South Carolina. I love Charleston, absolutely love
3 Charleston, but our family is in the Pee Dee region. All
4 of our economic development is around the Pee Dee region.

5 We need to make it official that Horry and
6 the Pee Dee remain whole and part of the South Carolina
7 plans for the seventh congressional district. It's
8 practical and it's proven through those relationships and
9 those bonds.

10 Separating Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle
11 Beach is inappropriate. It's inappropriate to separate
12 the economies of Horry and Horry and the Pee Dee region.

13 I would like to just close with a
14 statement from James Madison, the father of the
15 Constitution. I believe there are more instances of
16 abridgment of freedom of the people by a gradual and
17 silent encroachments by those in power than violent and
18 sudden usurpations.

19 So we hope that you will consider Horry and
20 the Pee Dee as the family that we are.

21 Thank you so much for your time.

22 SENATOR McCONNELL: Murray Jordan.

23 MR. JORDAN: Good evening. Thank you for
24 this opportunity to speak on this item of importance. I
25 am Murray Jordan, a lifelong resident of Florence, South

1 Carolina. I have known every congressman for the sixth
2 district since and including John L. McMillan, Ed Young,
3 John Jenrette, John Napier, Robin Tallon, and Jim
4 Clyburn.

5 I well remember when the sixth district was
6 the Pee Dee and the Grand Strand of northeastern South
7 Carolina. This was a district of similar people and
8 interests. Tobacco and agriculture were king. We were
9 all represented by congressmen that lived in the area,
10 again, that lived in the area that I described, and we
11 were all properly represented, no matter what the
12 political party.

13 Then came the census and the insane
14 redistricting of 1992 with the gerrymandered sixth
15 district that stretched from practically Georgia to North
16 Carolina and from nearly Charleston to the governor's
17 mansion, a district that looked like a Rorschach inkblot
18 made by a drunken rat and made absolutely no sense except
19 to create a district that favored an incumbent's
20 reelection.

21 I understand that it took 22 media buys,
22 and only an incumbent with the campaign fund-raising
23 ability of an incumbent could run effectively in the
24 district. The net result is that we of northeastern
25 portion of the current sixth district have had no

1 representation since 1993 and little in common with the
2 rest of the current sixth district.

3 I know that Jim Clyburn purports to
4 represent Florence, but it ain't so. You now have the
5 opportunity to restore the sixth district similar to what
6 it was before 1993 and rejoin we people of common
7 interest. Now, this would be the seventh district now
8 because of the extra seat and the population change.

9 We share the same media sources. The major
10 highways run through the old sixth district. We share
11 medical, railroad, business, entertainment, cultural,
12 intellectual, education. It just goes on and on. You've
13 heard that. We function now as for what our proposed
14 seventh district would encompass, but we have no common
15 congressional representation. We've even created the
16 NESAs Alliance, the Northeastern Strategic Alliance, which
17 has been mentioned. That is a powerful tool, and it
18 really confirms that we are a family of the -- what we're
19 proposing and what the House has proposed as the seventh
20 district.

21 The new seventh district now passed by the
22 House of Representatives will give us in Florence County
23 and the surrounding counties represented --
24 representation in Congress again after 20 years without
25 representation, 20 years of voter dilution. We have

1 invested much effort in getting a map drawn that restores
2 commonality of representation to the Pee Dee and Grand
3 Strand of South Carolina.

4 I am encouraging the South Carolina Senate
5 to adopt the seventh congressional district map created
6 by the House of Representatives without alterations. We
7 want our vote back, and we want representation.

8 Thank you.

9 SENATOR McCONNELL: Brad Dean.

10 MR. DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm
11 Brad Dean. I'm here today on behalf of the Myrtle Beach
12 Area Chamber of Commerce, an organization representing
13 more than 2800 businesses and organizations that employ
14 nearing 50,000 people, most of those employed in Horry,
15 Georgetown, Williamsburg, and Marion County.

16 I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the
17 senators on this committee for the hearings you've held,
18 including the hearing you held in the city of Myrtle
19 Beach several weeks ago, as well for this opportunity
20 today for us to come and comment on plans that have been
21 submitted.

22 I won't repeat the comments being made
23 earlier today, but let me just stress two key points that
24 we think are very, very important for this committee to
25 consider as you finalize your recommendations, first and

1 foremost, the long-term forecast for this area.

2 As has been mentioned several times, you
3 all are well aware the Myrtle Beach area and the Horry
4 County MSA is one of the fastest growing, not only in the
5 Carolinas but in the nation. And this -- the fact that
6 continues to get repeated by the media about a 37-percent
7 population increase, that's nothing new. If you look at
8 the 1990 census and 2000 census, we saw similar growth
9 rates.

10 When you look at the abundance of
11 affordable real estate, both developed and undeveloped,
12 in one of the largest counties east of the Mississippi,
13 any reasonable person would conclude that ten years from
14 now, the next redistricting committee will be -- again be
15 talking about a fast-growing population in and around the
16 Horry County area. We should certainly recognize that
17 this fast-growing area is going to continue to grow and
18 develop.

19 Secondly, we think it's very, very
20 important for this committee to consider the communities
21 of interest, particularly from an economic standpoint.
22 When you think about this area, many of the employees in
23 the tourism industry come from Marion County,
24 Williamsburg County. So right there you have a
25 four-county economic community of interest when you think

1 about Horry, Georgetown, and those two outlying counties.

2 When you think about the importance of
3 Interstate 73, perhaps the single most important
4 infrastructure investment in our future in that region,
5 one that is purported to create nearly 29,000 jobs -- and
6 even if the economists that came up with those numbers
7 are half right, that's still the single biggest job
8 creation project in South Carolina's future -- that will
9 only bind those economic ties in that community of
10 interest even tighter.

11 When you think about recently the FAA was
12 looking at the possibility of creating a regional
13 airport -- probably not a likely alternative any time in
14 the near future -- but that was a discussion about should
15 there be an airport in the Pee Dee region, not
16 necessarily between Horry and Charleston regions -- and,
17 as well, when you think about the future of this area and
18 the economic ties that already exist and will continue to
19 develop and be enhanced, we think it's certainly very
20 important as we look at this Pee Dee region that it be
21 considered as such.

22 And, Mr. Chairman, specifically on the plan
23 drafted by staff -- I believe it's Staff Plan Number 1,
24 the one that -- that, essentially, allocates Horry County
25 in two different districts -- I recognize that there are

1 46 counties and seven congressional seats, so some
2 counties probably are going to be divided up amongst at
3 least two seats.

4 That said, there's no county that generates
5 the kinds of economic returns in the state, and yet, with
6 the population growing, you could find that would be
7 split amongst any two plans. We realize one county is
8 probably going to have be to be split, if not more, but
9 we would ask you to give serious consideration to keeping
10 that one particular county together.

11 Only in the Bible with King Solomon did I
12 ever see a solution where splitting a baby up like that
13 would make sense, and even King Solomon, the wisest man
14 in the world, according to the Bible, could not make
15 sense out of that redistricting plan, I think, when we
16 look at the future of this area.

17 So we would consider that to be a top
18 priority. We know this is a challenging task made only
19 more challenging by a very demanding legislative session,
20 but we also know that you're up to the task, and we
21 encourage you to give strong considerations to the
22 community of interest economically that already exist and
23 will only be enhancing further as this region grows and
24 develops, not just for the next ten years, but far into
25 the future.

1 We thank you for the time you've invested
2 so far. We thank you for your attention, and we
3 encourage you to draft this plan accordingly for the best
4 interest of all of South Carolina. We thank you.

5 SENATOR McCONNELL: James Gunn. Mr. Gunn,
6 James Gunn. Back behind the screen there. Come on up.

7 MR. GUNN: Okay. Mr. Chairman,
8 Subcommittee, thank you for having this hearing for us.
9 I just wanted to make a few comments. I don't want to --
10 I do want to reaffirm some comments that have already
11 been said. Maybe I'll just start with the congressional
12 Plan 1, the Senate Judiciary.

13 Okay. As you can see up there, which
14 doesn't quite make much sense to me, it looks like North
15 Myrtle Beach is actually being ripped away from the Grand
16 Strand. And, as we know, the Grand Strand is probably
17 considered one of the number one family resorts in the
18 country. So you take the North Myrtle Beach incorporated
19 into the balance of Horry County for District 7, and you
20 take the rest of it and keep it in District 1. That
21 doesn't quite make much sense to me.

22 But then -- then you take a look at Plan 2,
23 and Plan 2 mandates that Horry County remain in District
24 1 with Charleston. This plan will leave Horry County in
25 a district which is already dominated by Charleston

1 County voters, and that Beaufort will be awarded the new
2 seventh congressional seat. And I say -- well, at least
3 one of the split-up versions of Beaufort will be awarded
4 the new congressional seat.

5 The approved House plan correctly assigns
6 the new seventh congressional district to Horry,
7 Georgetown, and the other Pee Dee counties, with Horry
8 County as the centerpiece.

9 As you all know, Horry County is the
10 largest county in South Carolina. We've already heard
11 about the tremendous growth in the past decade. Growth,
12 tremendous growth in the retirement communities, in
13 tourism, and, as most of you probably know, it is the
14 golf mecca of our country. Yet these two Senate plans
15 refuse to recognize the importance of Horry County, of
16 its residents, and the favorable financial impact it
17 provides to our state.

18 Thank you.

19 SENATOR McCONNELL: Mr. Cliff Clark.
20 Mr. Clark, are you behind the screen, too? All right.

21 MR. CLARK: Thank you, gentlemen, for the
22 opportunity to speak here. I can't say much that hasn't
23 already been covered, so I'll keep it brief.

24 It seems like only a few -- I don't know --
25 politicians with, I'm going to say, some ulterior motives

1 could come up with some of these plans. They just don't
2 make a whole lot of sense.

3 My wife and my five sons are all native
4 Horry Countians, and they're really proud to be Horry
5 Countians, as I am for the last 32 years.

6 Congressman Clemmons' plan seems to have --
7 what did I say?

8 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: Representative.

9 MR. CLARK: What did I call you,
10 congressman? I didn't have my glasses on. Sorry about
11 that.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMMONS: That's all right.

13 MR. CLARK: Representative Clemmons'
14 plan -- soon to be congressman --- makes the most sense,
15 by far. And I humbly appeal to your sense of fair play
16 and judgment in making that right decision.

17 Thank you.

18 SENATOR McCONNELL: Thank you, sir.

19 Maria Jean Hamby. Did I get that right, or
20 is it Marla?

21 MS. HAMBY: It's Marla.

22 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right. I'm sorry.

23 MS. HAMBY: Thank you, gentlemen, for
24 holding this meeting. And I have changed my comments.
25 I'm fairly new to politics, and I am paying a lot of

1 attention to what's going on.

2 I would like for you to keep the Pee Dee
3 District as recommended by the House of Representatives,
4 and I further would like for you to just show the three
5 plans to our governor, Nikki Haley, and let her pick the
6 one that she likes. I do trust Nikki Haley. I think
7 that she has the best interests of our state, and lest
8 any of you are up for reelection forget that, women have
9 a lot of power and a lot of scorn. If you scorn our
10 governor, you scorn me and a lot of these ladies in the
11 audience. So I just would like you to show her three
12 plans and say, Pick one.

13 SENATOR McCONNELL: Charlie Luquire.
14 Mr. Luquire, did I get that correct?

15 MR. LUQUIRE. Senator, thank you.
16 Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, ladies and
17 gentlemen, my name is Charlie Luquire. I live in
18 Georgetown County. I live on the Waccamaw Neck part of
19 Georgetown County. My comments concern proposed
20 redistricting as it affects Georgetown County.

21 In comments I made at the April 4th hearing
22 in Myrtle Beach by the House of Representatives on
23 redistricting, I placed into the record concerning
24 redistricting of congressional districts a statement
25 supporting a new District 7 to include Horry, Georgetown,

1 Williamsburg, Florence, Darlington, Marion, Marlboro,
2 Chesterfield, and Dillon counties.

3 I stated in my -- I stated in my statement
4 on April 4th that it was my opinion that Georgetown had
5 close ties and much in common with Horry County. Some of
6 the previous speakers have addressed those common ties
7 that include history, economic development, education,
8 transportation, media, tourism, and growth.

9 Both of the proposals that the Senate has
10 presented, as of last Friday at least, do little to
11 acknowledge the close ties that exist between Horry,
12 Georgetown, and the other counties just listed.

13 In one proposed Horry -- in one proposed
14 Horry County -- excuse me -- one proposal, Horry County
15 and portions of Georgetown County remain in reconstituted
16 District 1, a proposed narrow coastal district that
17 extends from North Carolina almost to Beaufort.

18 In the other case, a small portion of Horry
19 County is carved out and placed along with a portion of
20 Georgetown County -- a portion of Georgetown County in a
21 separate iteration of District 1 with the remainder of
22 most of Horry County in proposed District 7 and most of
23 Georgetown County in a proposed and reconstituted
24 District 6.

25 I urge the Senate to reconsider the

1 proposals -- these proposals and place Georgetown County
2 in a new district with Horry County and the other
3 counties I mentioned, some of them at least, similar to
4 that proposed by the South Carolina House of
5 Representatives.

6 Thank you. I have a copy of those
7 comments.

8 SENATOR McCONNELL: Mr. Chuck Ottwell. I
9 got that?

10 MR. OTTWELL: Yes, that's close enough.

11 SENATOR McCONNELL: All right.

12 MR. OTTWELL: Senator, Committee, I thank
13 you for the opportunity to speak this afternoon. I'm --
14 I am the president of the South Strand Republican Club in
15 Horry County, although I could almost hit a golf ball
16 from my backyard over into Georgetown County. We're that
17 close.

18 I'm here supporting the House plan for the
19 seventh district uniting the Pee Dee counties back
20 together again. I have here one of the volumes that
21 Senator Cleary has put together and received over the
22 last couple of years. The same thing, supporting --
23 there's four volumes. He has three. I have one. I will
24 not bore you with -- one of my letters is in here. I
25 will not bore you, just like Alan said, with regard to

1 reading such, but we just would like for your committee
2 to please, please take into consideration the House plan
3 reuniting the Pee Dee counties together again.

4 Thank you very much. And no matter what
5 your decision is, as a concerned South Carolinian and a
6 voter, I will support it. But we would like these four
7 volumes put into the record.

8 Thank you very much.

9 SENATOR McCONNELL: Mr. Jonathan Cowan.

10 MR. COWAN: Good evening, Senator, members
11 of the subcommittee. Could you put up Map Number 2,
12 Senate Plan Number 2? There it is.

13 Now, I can't speak on family and heritage
14 because I'm not originally from Florence, South Carolina.
15 I spent the -- the better part of the decade active duty
16 military, traveled from Georgia, New York, Iraq and
17 Afghanistan both. And through that time, my only voting
18 was through absentee ballots, and everyone knows absentee
19 ballots, most of the time, the election is already done
20 by the time that those get voted in or looked at.

21 But I was rather excited when I came to
22 Florence, South Carolina thinking I was going to get to
23 vote, and my vote was going to count. Unfortunately,
24 right now, it doesn't, and the two plans that you have up
25 there right now don't, and it's all based primarily on --

1 what it seems to be, anyway, is race and on political
2 agenda.

3 I would like to reference Shaw vs. Reno,
4 U.S. Supreme Court Case 509. The Supreme Court voted in
5 favor of racial gerrymandering. However, it did say that
6 there need to be -- held a strict standard of scrutiny on
7 such things, and that if you are going to give rights to
8 one certain classification, then you shouldn't be taking
9 rights from another classification. That needs to be
10 equal. And the very first question I heard coming from
11 this panel tonight was on race.

12 So I think that when we do make these
13 decisions, we need to weigh in on the side not of race
14 and not on the side of political partisanship, but we
15 need to weigh in on democracy, which is one of the main
16 qualities of this country and of the state of South
17 Carolina.

18 And I'm pretty much reaffirming everything
19 that people have already stated. But, I mean, more or
20 less, we know this is going to go up to court, and a
21 couple of judges are going to decide what happens, but we
22 have the opportunity here to let democracy take place and
23 run its course, and I would implore you to do that.

24 Thank you.

25 SENATOR McCONNELL: Stephanie Rawlinson.

1 Stephanie Rawlinson.

2 MS. RAWLINSON: Mr. Chairman and members of
3 the committee, thank you so much for having us today. We
4 appreciate your willingness to listen to the people of
5 the -- of the areas that are affected by these maps.

6 First, I want to talk -- I've been reading
7 a little bit about the guidelines for redistricting. One
8 is district compactness. In determining the relative
9 compactness of a district, consideration should be given
10 to geography, demography, demographics, communities of
11 interest, and the extent to which parts of the district
12 are joined by roads, media outlets, or other means for
13 constituents to communicate -- communicate effectively
14 with each other and their representative.

15 I believe if you look at the -- I think
16 it's Senate Plan 1. There you go. I don't grasp the
17 concept of compactness in this. If you look at this
18 strip going up the beach here, it's completely separated
19 from Berkeley County by part of the sixth that juts down
20 into it.

21 I am -- I forgot to tell you that I am the
22 president of the Women's Republican Group in Florence. I
23 am also the first vice-chairman of the GOP in Florence,
24 County.

25 This is just not compact. That doesn't

1 make any sense. Why would you divide a community like
2 the Grand Strand into North Myrtle Beach and South Myrtle
3 Beach?

4 Furthermore, I did a little more research,
5 and I want to concur with everything that Representative
6 Clemmons said and everything that Ethan Rivera said.

7 In Florence County, we shop in Myrtle
8 Beach. Myrtle Beach comes to Florence to do business. I
9 sell real estate. I don't sell real estate in Charleston
10 County. I sell it in Florence County and in Horry
11 County. We've got to realize that these -- these
12 communities are tied together. Darlington is tied
13 into -- tied into us together. Our roads go through
14 there. And if you're going to go to the beach, you go
15 through Florence. I mean, it doesn't make any sense to
16 me why you would divide those communities.

17 As you look back in history, in 1882, when
18 there were four congressional seats, you'll notice up in
19 the corner here, you got the Pee Dee. The Pee Dee
20 consists of seven counties, which are Chesterfield,
21 Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion,
22 Marlboro, and Williamsburg. If you look at the original
23 map, there it is.

24 In 1882 to 1886, you still look, and the
25 Pee Dee is still together in one map. You look again in